

REBEL DESTINY

574
609 In his own house, Fandya continued to urge our staying. "Ame'ika Fandya," he said—the year before he had given his own name to the white man—"remain with us tonight and tomorrow. I am an old man. I would like to know that you saw a dance in my village. When you go to the Neng'e country, I would like you to say that Captain Fandya knew how to treat a stranger who came as a friend. Last year when you were here you said you would come with your wife. You have come. Your wife has come. Last year you came, and since then all has gone well in our village. Today there are not many people about. The women are away in the fields harvesting the rice; the men are in the bush hauling lumber. But tomorrow night the women will come in from the planting grounds, because the day after they may not work in the fields, and tomorrow, too, the men will come. Stay and see our dances."

[462] And the bassia, the man second in command, said, [789] "Mati, last year I took an obia against the evil eye from my own door and gave it to you to hang over yours, that enemies entering your house might not bring in with them bad magic. All has gone well with you. Stay. The gods have shown they favor our friendship."

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361 The will of the Gankwe men had, however, prevailed, and we reached the village of Pa'aba that day in good time. It was one of the largest on the river. In front of the azang which guarded the road new boats lay on their sides, and farther up the path were others in the making, some black inside with charring, others huge hollowed-out logs, like gigantic drums, waiting for the hand that would set their pulses beating. These boats were as large as any we had seen on the river, as large as the boat Sedefo had rejected because it rolled and he had to think of his kunu.

[556] Kasanya said, "This is a prosperous village. They make the best boats on the river here."

And Bayo said, "Ai, this village has strong men."

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241 away from the river? When the big rains come, the river
361 goes up more and more. If our crops were too close to the
water, then in the big rains the land would be flooded,
and the crops long under water. . . . Yes, and we have to

[36] think of the ants, too. Ants, once they find their way into a
field, will destroy everything. They like especially the

[37] green leaves of the young cassava plants. When the young
leaves go, there is no cassava. So we move farther and
farther away for our fields. Two, three years, and new fields
must be cut, so that the yield might feed us all."

311 Once a field had been deserted, say, for five years, why
241 did they not reclaim it later? we enquired, for by that time
the big bush would have made fertile again the soil that
had been exhausted.

"In this bush we do it like that. Why, I don't know. Our
ancestors found much land for us. When we want new
fields, we cut farther and farther into the bush."

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As Bayo and Angita set off for the dance at Pa'aba,
Kasanya and Sedefo joined us, and we talked of crops and
[521] planting, of woman's work and man's, of good harvests
and bad, and this is what was told us.

[462] Finding a new field and clearing it is a man's task. If a
man is about to be married, or if the field a man's wife works
has become exhausted, then he goes into the forest, near
to the planting ground of his mother and to the fields of
his family, and casts about for a place to clear. A field
must not be in a hollow, or the crops will not grow, and
rice needs the sun of a hill slope to thrive. Once having
311 found a spot where the drainage is good, he looks about to
241 see if the spirits will allow its use. Patiently, painstakingly,
776 he goes from one clump of matted vines to the next, machete
in hand, searching for signs of an ant hill, or an Akatasi
tree that is sacred to the gods of the ant hill, or for snakes,
or a natural clearing belonging to the Apuku gods of the
bush. No silk-cotton tree must be there, no loko tree
wherein dwells the god of the same name so near that it

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might catch fire were a wind to come up when the underbrush is burned. If he spies a slender bent liana from which the Kromanti "Congo-bush" sticks are made, then he has to be sure to cut it down with the proper invocation, so that the spirit inside the liana will not bend him to its own shape.

Kasanya continued his explanation. "When a field is found, it is the man who clears it." A man calls on his relatives or friends to help him. The men come with their machetes, and they cut away at bushes and shrubs, they cut away the lianas which are twined about the trees, and then the trees themselves. Then they go away, leaving what they have cut to dry. "To take all this away would be too hard, and, besides, fire does the work better, and fertilizes the ground as well."

So, when the wood is dry, they come with fire, and let the fire finish the work. Then the ashes are allowed to lie for a time, for, though this clearing is done during the dry season, occasional showers can be relied upon to work the ash into the ground. Then, too, the time for planting is not yet.

"Many things we plant a little before the old year meets the new," the old woman said.

"When it is time to break the ground," Kasanya went on, "the man and the woman work together. It is then that the woman begins her work in this field. What was done before had to do with cutting timber, and our proverb says: Woodworking is not a woman's affair."

The man alone clears the ground, but the woman helps him break the earth.

"Breaking the ground is not easy," the old woman again interrupted. The matted roots have to be dug up with an iron hoe, for the Bush Negro works as his ancestors did hundreds of years ago in Africa. He has no plough, no beast of burden to help him in the fields.

When all this is done, then it is time to see to the consecration of the earth to its fertile uses. Rituals vary with each clan, and often from village to village of the same clan.

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782 Among the people of one group, the principal ceremony
241 may be held in the clearing itself. The drums are brought,
535 and men and women and children pray for fertility. The
beautifully carved apinti drum sounds the invocation to the
Great God and to the ancestors, while the tall agida drums
are brought to call the earth spirits. Two by two the men
dance susa, the dance which in pantomime reproduces an
ancient warrior's combat with spear and shield, the winner
taking on a new combatant, until the final winner is given
a wand as a reward, and gains for himself the title of
"G'aman of Susa" until the next dance is held. Other
dances follow. Perhaps the women now line up in two long
[585] rows facing each other, and dance bandamba, the dance
[845] which celebrates marriage and the birth of twins, and the
birth of a child who is born feet foremost. The motions are
the slow rhythmic manipulations of the muscles of hips and
[842] abdomen. It is a dance of fertility, danced by the very
young girls as well as by those who have borne children.
But the women who are past the age for dancing sit with
[888] their men, arms interlaced, swaying to the rhythms of the
songs they sing. . . . There are offerings to the earth
spirits, poured upon the earth out of black obia pots and
[769] calabashes, while other offerings are set upon the ground for
the ancestors.

In another settlement, the ritual would be chiefly carried
on in the village itself, and there might be a local dance of
[842] fertility, danced nowhere else on the river. "An old, old
ancestress taught it to us," the villagers would say.

When it is time to plant, the woman plants with the
462 man's help.
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782 "When I plant a new field," said the younger woman, "I
539 pray as I work."

And this is her prayer:

*O Sky God, Mother of the Earth, Ancestors,
I am planting a field,
Make it bear;
People who come to me must eat,*

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O spirits, you must help me.
Help me find food,
That I may give to those who come;
Help me find food,
That all those who come to me may eat.
I am planting pinda,
Make it come;
I am planting yams,
My yams must grow;
I am planting cassava,
Make my cassava yield;
I am planting rice,
Make it come;
Let the earth copulate well,
Let me, too, be fruitful;
Let me live by my work;
My children have gone down the river,
They have gone to the white man's country,
Let them live and be fruitful;
When they return to me,
Let them bring back possessions;
O spirits, I myself must live,
I have belongings,
Let my belongings live;
Mother of the Earth,
This new field which was found
Make it yield food for me,
Make it yield for those who come;
I have planted seed,
The seed must bear.
O Great God, Earth spirits, Ancestors,
I thank you.

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After the planting, the life of the women is spent at the provision grounds for the greater portion of the year, for the crops must be carefully tended. The jungle is not hospitable to those who invade it, and it is only at the

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462 price of grueling effort that a living can be wrested from its
241 jealous grasp. The women in their fields care for the growing
crops, hoeing the ground so that moisture and sun reach
the young plants, seeing that the lianas which throw their
creepers over the cleared spaces to throttle the tender shoots
do not get headway, and, as each crop ripens, attending to
its harvesting.

262 Yams, cassava, and nappi are roots. For their planting
243 some of the crop of the year before is preserved and cut up.
244 But rice and peanuts, or pinda, as these are called here in
the bush, and maize, of which the Bush Negroes learned
from the Indians, and okra grow from seeds. The rice is
planted on a hillside, for the Bush Negro does not grow
irrigated rice, but the dry African variety that thrives on
the slopes. Cassava, okra, peppers, plantains, peanuts,
beans, sugar cane—each crop is allotted its own space,
until the newly cleared ground is filled. A woman usually
has two fields cut for her; one is called a rice field and one a
cassava field. In each, the crops which yield several harvests
a year are rotated. The cassava roots take nine months at
least to ripen, but it is better to leave them in the ground
ten or eleven months.

"It is the time of the great harvest now," the old woman
said.

243 These were busy days for the women. With their short-
244 handled knives, they cut the rice stalk by stalk and made
small sheaves of the golden grain, raked over the dirt so
that the peanuts might be found and gathered, chopped
the ripe sugar cane with the machetes which they handled
with the same sureness as did their men, and dug out the
cassava roots so that they might be carried to the village
and made into flour for the cassava bread which was the
staple of their diet.

[262] "The corn," she said, "is not harvested now. We cut it
at a different time; and the melons ripen later, too." At
other times of the year there were other harvests, but this
one, of the months of July and August, was the principal
one.

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It is the woman's task, then, to see to the food which the Earth Mother yields, while the men are busy hauling lumber and making boats, hunting and fishing, and carrying the white man's loads to the city. In the leisure of the rainy season, while the women cut up the trade cotton cloth into long, narrow strips and sew them into cloths of traditional design, the men are at work carving fine things out of wood. 462 ●

When the big rains come a man might busy himself carving doorposts for his new house, or he might make a paddle to put away in his personal treasure house, so that, when he is ready to take a second wife, he might have the proper gifts to make her. Another might be making a small canoe paddle for his first daughter. She is four, perhaps, and already is of help to her mother in the field, carrying water from the river in a small Indian jar. Soon she will be strong enough to have the cutting of the kamemba begin—a few slashes about the navel at first . . . He will cover the surface of the paddle with beautiful traceries, each design a meaningful symbol, and to add to its beauty he will darken it with a mixture of oil and charred rice hulls. When it is finished it will be of a reddish-brown color, slender, and smooth to the touch of his fingers as the skin of his woman-child. Combs, food stirrers, trays, stools, peanut pounding boards, and, if a man likes, mortar and pestle—all these are carved when the rains are heavy and there is no work to be done on the river or in the bush. [294]
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So the work is divided. A man does a man's work—wood, iron, hunting the game animals of the bush, and catching fish in traps, making baskets of wood fiber—all that is a man's affair he does. And the woman, tending the fields and cooking for her family, pounding palm nuts in her mortar to make palm oil, grating the bitter cassava to make flour free from the poison that is in the roots, caring for her house and carving calabash dishes with the symbols of men and women and fertility—woman does what it is woman's lot to do. 462
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782 Now she could but say that the Granman had asked her to see to this.

"It is good medicine. Do not be afraid," she added, reassuringly.

She led the way to her quarter, but before we had gone past the open shrine she stopped, and her eyes narrowed as she tried to come to a decision. From the quarter we were approaching came a crooning, moaning sound.

787 "A god speaks. The Apuku god has come to a woman this morning. Come. We will go to the G'aman's women," she said as she retraced her steps.

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888 On a squared log in back of the enclosed shrine which adjoined the council house sat the Granman's principal wife. She was a woman who in her prime must have had beauty, but, though still erect, she had deep grooves on her face, and her breasts were the breasts of an old woman. Her head was closely shorn, as was the way of women whose children were grown. Like any other woman of the village she wore only the short cloth and the bit of kerchief which showed at her waist. Like the others she went to the provision ground almost daily. She and her younger daughter, who was named Wilhelmina for the Queen of Holland, cared for their field together, and now they were working side by side.

644 Wilhelmina was more robust than her mother could have been at her age. She was tall, more her father's daughter. It was she who served his food and looked after his personal needs. She was the wife of the man who had brought the boat which Sedefo had rejected, because he did not trust its spirit. As she worked, her two children were with her, the elder a child of three, sitting on the ground at her feet, and the other on her back, or in her lap nursing while she did her tasks.

Unlike her older sister, Wilhelmina had little of her father's astuteness, of his quick eye, or his schooled tongue. She went about with the slow, sensuous grace of someone not quite awake, while her older sister busied herself with making the rounds of the village, observing this and that

WOMEN AT WORK

rod set into a base of clay, rotated steadily as she worked. ⁶⁴⁴
Her fingers moved fast, for she did not require too fine a ²⁸⁶
thread. The raw cotton, she said, she got from a wild "cotton
tree." Cotton which was picked in the fields and which
grew from seeds planted in the ground, she did not know
at all. Was there such cotton?

Working in the fields, she continued, was not too difficult. ⁶⁴⁴
It was a woman's work. A woman did not mind it. From ²⁸⁶
earliest childhood girls followed their mothers about, and
learned how to work the fields. ⁶⁴⁴

"What is hard is having to cut my own field. I have no
man to cut it for me. I must cut it myself."

She paused for an instant to right her thread.

"When I plant my field, and pray to the gods to make
the seed grow, then I ask the Earth Mother to help me find
a way to get a man to cut my field for me. 'Earth Mother,'
I say, 'help me find a man to cut my field. I have great
need of a man to burn my ground.' . . . "

Seeing two women approach, she said, "Fenekonde here
is like myself, she too needs a man to cut her field."

But this needed explaining. Here were two women who
called the Granman "husband," and who shared the
difficulty of having to clear their own fields.

It was soon made apparent, however, that both of these ⁶⁴⁴
women were only nominally wives of the Granman. They ²⁸⁶
had married into his family. When kunu, however, killed ⁵⁸⁹
one successor to his office after the other, these women were
made widows. Like the widow who now worked alone
before her house which fronted the clearing, where stood
the shrine to the great gods and the Granman's principal
houses, they had worn tattered clothes, and a twisted ker-
chief as a band on their heads. For five months this had
lasted, and then a dance was given.

Did the white woman know about the ceremony called
pai Adyo?

The white woman had heard the word Dyo-dyo from ^{MA}
natives of the town many times. Once, indeed, a question
about it put to an old woman, who it later developed was

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353 themselves, and the blade-like pieces of gourd which they
531 used for spoons, and which bore the same symbols as the
415 dishes.

• 462 "Our men make fine things here in the true, true
531 Saramacca," Dida said when we entered her quarter, and
531 sat in her house. "Look at the carvings I have."

Her body was still white with pemba. Her manner was still a little vague.

"Did you dance this morning?"

"Ai."

776 "We heard the agida drum play when we were in the
776 council house of the Granman."

787 "Ai, Keskia is a big god. When he comes, his voice is strong."

But she showed no willingness to talk, and we could tell by the repeated twitching of her body that she had still to dance to her god. Leaving her we continued up the path toward houses we had not yet visited. The white man, with a man who was guiding him and the bassia from Asindopo Lantiwe, walked ahead, while the children crowded about the white woman who was giving them safety pins which they at once put in their hair.

798 "There is the Vodou house," said the man who acted as
346 guide, and he led the way through the low doorway into the hut.

Inside, though smaller than the shrine to the gods of the bush, it differed from it but little. It had the same clay floor, the same raised altar on which stood stools washed in white clay, and several covered, whitened vessels, an image, and the round balls of clay.

"May I go closer and look at the image there?"

"Yes, go."

[352] The stools resembled those in ordinary use, but whatever design they may have had was obscured by the white clay which covered them. The vessels were not unlike those in the other shrine we had visited or those which rested on the heads of village gods which stood under low, roofed-over shelters on the main village paths. Turning, the white man

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ARA Sedefo might greet his sister. It was almost a half-day's travel, going up river, from Asindopo Lantiwe, yet it was not quite noon, and we were passing it. Here was Hei Kununu, its steep slopes already swinging into sight as we rounded a bend of the river and came through the small rapids above the settlement, and still it seemed as though we had but begun our course down toward our base camp and the railhead. And it was still early in the afternoon when we came to Ma'lobbi.

3

462 At the landing place, women were about. Much of the work of the Bush Negro woman is at the river's edge, and for strangers like ourselves, passing in a dugout, the presence of women working on the bank was the only sign that here was a landing place, and that farther inland lay a village. To the river they came with their carved clothes beaters, like the one we could see in the hand of the woman who greeted us here at Ma'lobbi, fashioned, as we later learned when she sold it to us, in the shape of a male vodu head on one end, and a female snake on the other. It was at the edge of the water that a woman scraped cooking pots and calabash dishes with sand, and it was here, (if it seemed a good day for fishing, that a woman would go wading in the water to rest a cooking pot on the river bottom, and stand silently until an inquisitive school of small fish swam into it when, with a quick jerk, she would bring it up to take out what fish there were. This, aside from the use of small hooks, was the only kind of fishing a woman could do, for the fishing traps were for the use of men. But the cooking pot brought in many small fish to add flavor to a dish of rice.

123 609 As we walked into the village, accompanied by one of our younger paddlers, the bassia greeted us. The head of the village was waiting for us, he told us. Paddlers of small boats on their way downstream had spread the word that our visit with the Granman was drawing to an end.

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531 The greater part of these carvings men made for women,
431 and it was a rare woman who did not take pride in the
excellence of the carvings given her, though often it must
have been the pride in something which had traditional
value, for it would be false to assume that among any
people are all men equally endowed with creativeness
and all women with sensitive appreciation of what is
created.

462 As among so many peoples, two or three types of art
532 were to be found. There was the same sex division in the
302 art of these people as existed in all other aspects of life,
and the men were the wood carvers. The sharpest division
in the art of the men was that between the secular and
the religious. The religious art was crude. A block of wood,
roughly shaped, with several cuts to indicate a face, per-
haps a break in the line to represent the neck, and a few
more strokes in the wood to differentiate the upper part
of the woman's body, and there stood an ancestral image,
or a village god. Often white clay was added to this, and
sometimes alternate stripes of white and red, or white, red,
and black, but when seen on a village path underneath a
low open shelter, what color there once was had become
Fm8 weathered to a dull gray. The sacred art also included the
1989 charms called obias, worn on the neck, and about the upper
301 arm, or wrist, or below the knee, or at the ankle. Many
of these made pleasing ornaments. The white fiber dipped
in red clay became a deep golden brown as the sun paled
the crimson, and there would be the added color of a
finger's length of blue and orange parrot feather, fastened
inside the woven fiber square, and extending below the
fringe of the weave. Into this woven square cowries might
be sewn, two facing each other, or three, or four.

532 There was also the art of modeling, but this was so secret
and so specialized that we were assured that not even all
Bush Negroes knew of its existence, and modeled objects
appeared only in the most important of the shrines.

With the religious art might also perhaps be grouped the
red and white striped crooked sticks of the Kromanti

BAYO, THE PLAYBOY

"Bayo has asked me to find a strong *arumasi* for you," she said, naming the *obia* she held with the word for such magically endowed properties used by the Ashanti today, on the West Coast of Africa. In rapid succession she gave us the African words of the Kromanti designation for the white clay, for the ancestral pot, and for several other ceremonial objects we discussed with her.

"Did you make these for us?"

"Ah, no. Women do not make *obias*. My brother made them for you."

The next morning when we were leaving Djamungo she came to the landing place with us. In our hands were the images we had bought. The young paddlers looked on them with fear. On no account would they even come too close to us who carried them. It was not the image, nor the external properties of a sacred object which disclosed its power, but rather the magic that had been called to reside in it, and the strength of the gods of him who had been instrumental in bringing the magic to the figure of wood, the brass bell, the cowrie shells, the ant-eater's bristles, or whatever else was used.

"Tell them in your village," Bayo's mother's sister called after us, "that here at Djamungo the Kromanti spirit does not come to men only. When women get Kromanti, they, too, can fight."

2

We had not been back at our base camp for more than a day when Bayo came up the path calling the greeting of a comrade. Had we fared well with the Granman?

He had, he told with pride, seen all those things a man who went on so long a journey should see, and he had been to Lamé again, where there were strong *obias* and where the women knew how to love. Now he would remain with us until we left the bush, and he might even decide to go with us to the city, and from there to the French shore, where there was money to be got. What with the money he had earned for timber, and the money we had given

BAYO, THE PLAYBOY

houses would have to be built—one in his village where ^{Then} they would live, and one in the provision ground for his wife to sleep in when she worked in the field. [584] [342]

"Must you yourself build the house, Bayo?"

"My family will help me. Making a house is hard work, too, and a man must have clever fingers for weaving the walls." [496] [468]

There would have to be stools, and several well-ornamented combs. A clothes beater would have to be provided for the bride, and a peanut pounding board, and one mortar and pestle at least, and food stirrers and rice trays. A cassava squeezer would have to be woven, and a sifter and grater for the roots that were made into bread. And baskets, too, he would have to weave.

"This is not all. This is only what I must make. Other things I must buy for her."

He would have to provide cloths when the wedding day came, and cloths for his mother-in-law, too. The small kerchiefs which were folded in triangular shape and were worn about the waist as the sign that a woman was married he would also have to furnish, and two large cloths, each the size of three tunics. He would have to buy an iron cooking pot, and some small fishhooks with lines, and some cups from the white man's city. He was going to give his girl a pair of earrings, and a string of beads. Then there would have to be the hammock. [585] [492]

Bayo laughed, "For a marriage, there must be a hammock."

There were other things he was going to buy for his girl. Brass arm and leg ornaments he would buy, since his girl was already a fine dancer.

And when all these things were bought and given, then it was time for the marriage.

"But it doesn't always happen that the marriage takes place," said Bayo. "Sometimes the girl's people do not like what the man has done. They have another krutu, and decide the man should not marry into their family."

241 Behind each village, a quarter of a mile to five miles dis-
 313 tant, are its provision grounds, which the women work. They
 consist of tiny patches of half an acre or more, carved out
 of the heart of the jungle by means of terrific labour. It
 [442] takes the men weeks of work with axes and bush-knives to
 clear the ground. The fallen trees, some of extremely hard
 wood, are cut up, burnt, or carried away. The brush is cleared
 with a machete, or bush-knife, which Negroes call a
 neefee; they swing this blade with amazing force by making
 the wrist the centre of its arc.

● 1462 The women, as in most primitive societies, tend to the
 241 planting and harvesting of the crops. They are helped by the
 men of the family on some occasions, such as when the har-
 vest is threatened by voracious parasites. The arduous labour
 of cultivating the stubborn earth comes so naturally to a
 Bush Negro woman that she is incredulous when told that
 elsewhere the males alone till the soil.

136 A leaf-cutting ant, *Ecodoma cephalotes*, that carries small
 241 bits of leaves into its nest, preys on the cassava fields. These
 ants march in two parallel columns, one going to the fields
 and the other returning, and systematically ruin the crop.
 The bit of green that each ant is carrying off looks like an
 umbrella; hence they are called umbrella ants. They live on a
 fungus which they grow on the cut leaves. Large numbers of
 them working together can denude an entire cassava field in
 a comparatively short time.

134 The jungle ground is not excessively fertile, for the in-
 241 cessant downpours leach out the humus, and there is not

531 In the combs, paddles, and other pieces of wood carv-
 322 ing illustrated in this book, the most casual observer will discern a great beauty of form and design. The sense of line, the feeling for balance, combined with elaborate conception and execution, compare well with the productions of the highly sophisticated artists of our urban civilization. All of the wood carvings, collectively known as *sanni* or *timbeh*, follow certain traditional patterns. The individual motifs, however, are products of the individual imagination, and, judging by the variety and originality of the designs shown herewith, that imagination is evidently quite fertile.

- [462] All the carving is done by men. There is a ceremonial significance to this. These wooden pieces are tokens of love.

Love in the jungle is not the etherealized sentiment portrayed by Victorian novelists. When a man and woman

- [37] want each other the satisfaction of their desire is easy and immediate. The people are largely promiscuous among themselves. Under such conditions the existence of romantic sentiments is an impossibility.

822 Individual preference does, of course, exist, and this im-
 322 plies courtship. A man may want a woman who does not
 431 want him, and this implies wooing. The wooing consists in presenting the woman with specimens of *sanni*. Thus, every piece of wood carving is a token of love and affection, presented by a Bush Negro to his woman. The woman who accepts *sanni* from a suitor accepts his love along with it. The man naturally stores up a quantity of *sanni* in expecta-

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[241] The agriculture of the Bush Negroes, however, has become a matter which urgently demands the attention of the administration as a result of the wasteful use of land. Until now little attention has been paid to this, but if one wants to develop the interior of Surinam, this problem will also have to be looked into.

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[103] The data provided here throw light upon the agriculture of the Paramaccaners and the Aucaners on the Marowijne and the Tapanahoni. They were gathered during the above-mentioned medical expedition and during a trip to the Tapanahoni in October, 1952. The facts thus refer primarily to the Marowijne, but in general they are certainly also valid for the other rivers along which the Bush Negroes live. It is a typically Surinam problem, connected with the circumstance that the Bush Negroes have worked in the deep interior in the same fashion for hundreds of years, independent of the life in the civilized coastal region and almost completely outside the sphere of interest of the government.

2. The Grounds System

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[311] For the planting of agricultural crops the Bush Negro lays out little so-called food grounds. One is to understand by this cleared pieces of ground in the virgin forest on which the crops are cultivated. The grounds lie along the rivers on higher flat lands, mostly terraces that are not submerged during high water or, in the absence of such terrain, on the slopes of hills. They are more or less circular and have a surface area of a half to one and a half hectares.

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● 462 During the long dry season (October, November) the men clear the grounds. Two to three weeks thereafter the forest that has been felled is burned; the smaller branches are cleared away, but the trunks are left lying. The ground is not worked. As soon as the rains of the short rainy season begin, they start to plant and sow. This planting time falls in December and January. The wives of the Bush Negroes (for only the women do the further work) now plant all kinds of crops at the same time on one and the same ground.

/5 cont. /

133 This extreme fragmentation of the relief must be remembered
182 as one of the ecological factors influencing the human peopling
most directly; it renders the transport of heavy loads impracticable,
the establishing of roads practically impossible. Men are led to
[361] settle along the rivers, which constitute the only routes of penetration toward the interior of the country.

133 All the important rivers flow into an alluvial valley whose
132 width varies from some tens of meters to a kilometer, dry during
the greater part /6/ of the year, but flooded under several meters
134 of water during the great rains of May-June. This annual inunda-
241 tion makes the alluvial lands unfit for agriculture; the inhabitants
of Guiana cultivate only sloping lands and even very steep slopes
readily; for good drainage of the soil is indispensable for the
raising of manioc whose tubers, which remain in the ground for
more than a year, are threatened with rotting.

311 The cultivable zone is in fact closely limited around each
village. Practically, it is limited to a strip of 1,500 to 2,000
meters along the banks of each watercourse accessible to pirogues.
[482] Transport of manioc tubers, carried on by the women several
[462] times a month, becomes impracticable if the distance to be
covered with loads is greater than two kilometers at the maximum (1).

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1. The Djuka, very numerous on the Tapanahoni, cultivate as far as three or four kilometers from the river; but in general, the Refugee Blacks prefer to build farming habitations at a distance of several days' by boat from their village when this gives them the possibility of farming in the neighborhood of the banks.

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643 The grand man acts as land head for the whole of the tribe.
778 It is he who has the care of the sanctuary of mama gɔɔ and who
241 prays each year in the presence of a large gathering of people for
the fertility of the soil.

643 The grand man is the priest of Odun, divinity whom the Boni
793 regard as avenger of offenses against moral and religious law; by
776 virtue of this, he alone is qualified to administer the oath against
782 wifi (sorcery) and to implore the mercy of Odun toward those who
have gone against his laws by fighting with arms.

643 In his religious functions this usually weak and unobtrusive
156 man acts with sovereign authority and assurance, and we have
several times seen people tremble before him.

643 If someone has seriously transgressed the customary laws, or
681 if he has stolen, committed adultery, given blows, poured forth
[623] serious insults or curses, the grand man inflicts on him punishment
proportional to the gravity of the offense, such as making planks,
/73/ a boat, pounding rice (if it is a woman). The product of the
punishment is acquired by the grand man, as are the fines in
money which he imposes in less serious cases.

643 For example in October, 1952, two adolescents of Boniville,
685 Awétipay and Adyuka, were surprised while they were trying to
break into an inhabited house; the grand man sentenced them forth-
with to three days of forced labor, in the course of which he made
them clean the approaches to the village and collect for his benefit
wood for heating.

643 He can also punish disobedient or disrespectful young men
689 by making them do work reserved for women, such as weeding
462 the approaches to the village and the removal of dog droppings.

643 The grand man can confine a man to Boni villages by for-
681 bidding him to go beyond l'Enfant Perdu to the north and
Kormotibo to the south; that is called sitafu sama (sitafu = captive).
The man concerned, deprived of means of earning his living,
thus becomes dependent on his family until he makes honorable
amends.

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692 In fact, the society of the Refugee Blacks has not elaborated true political institutions; it is essentially a grouping for collective defense against suprahuman perils. The council, like the grand man, has power and authority only insofar as it remains closely bound to this function.

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[565] Absence of subordination. Among the Refugee Blacks no privileged class exists, /76/ and they all face life on a footing of rigorous equality; all receive the same education, must cultivate the soil, build their boats and houses, and live by paid work. The differences in standard of living observed from one to another stem basically from intelligence and work; and that, in spite of the belief in the possibility of getting rich by sorcery, is clearly understood by all.

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[465] Although the Boni willingly engage in paid work for one another in transportation by boat, there exists no tendency toward the formation of a class of rich people and one of wage-earners. 571
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[462] No servants exist among them, and one observes in their mutual relations no exploitation of the weak. Neither does one observe that a rich man tries to have done by another, for pay, the customary jobs he must carry out for the benefit of his wife (clearings, building of boats). This would be looked on with great disfavor. The grand man himself, if his grandson is not there to help him, goes himself to draw water from the river and he does it ostensibly, even though he has a constant concern for his prestige.

829 The misfortunes undergone by their ancestors are certainly at the base of this conception; for they have inspired in the Refugee Blacks a particular sense of human dignity which is not found to the same degree in Africa.

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1) They show the continuity and vitality of the custom of the Refugee Blacks. The proportion of boys and girls brought up by the mother, the paternal grandmother, the father, etc. is noticeably constant from one generation to the other. There is no tendency for the proportion of children raised by the father to increase; it even seems to decrease, which may be related to the increasing instability of marriages. In fact, in spite of European influences, no evolution is observed toward patrilineal structures among the Refugee Blacks.

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2) The fact that part of the children are raised outside of their own lineage has few consequences for the unity of the group; for most of them, when their education is finished, come to settle down in one of the villages belonging to their lineage.

Of 88 men born before 1936, 28 were raised outside their lineage; 21 of them came back to it; only seven, or less than 8 per cent, settled down in other lineages.

Of 78 women born before 1936, 12 were raised outside their lineage, of whom only four, or 5 per cent, settled permanently outside their group.

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Education of children. If the education of girls does not necessitate a difficult apprenticeship, it is not the same for boys; the sum of knowledge that /132/ a Refugee Black must possess to carry out effectively the techniques of his group is considerable. In particular, he must:

--Know more than 200 kinds of trees with their uses, the way to fell them, the way to work their wood;

--Be capable of constructing boats of at least 10 kegs (1,000 kilograms of load). This technique alone requires several years of apprenticeship;

--Acquire sufficient knowledge of carpenter work to build his house and that of his wife;

--Learn how to handle boats on the river and the techniques of transport boating.

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156 difficulty in learning the techniques of his group, for the years when the mind is most pliant have been lost in this regard; as for the knowledge acquired at school, it is so foreign to the life of the Refugee Blacks that at the end of a few years none of it remains except vague smatterings.

861 In general, the process of education employed among the Refugee Blacks is imitation of the adult. A child is rarely given a lesson as such. He sees something done, he tries on his own
868 initiative, and little by little he learns. For example, /133/ he sees his guardian make a boat; he is simply asked to go and get dry palm branches and to take away the chips; he hears the adults discuss the job as it goes on. At about the age of 12 or 13 he tries to make a first boat for himself with the help of an older comrade. He progressively acquires knowledge of this technique.

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462 Boys begin to take part in farm work from the age of six or seven, principally weeding and planting. At about ten or eleven they begin to handle the machete and help to cut through the bush; at about 12 they begin to handle the axe and learn to fell trees. At 14 or 15 they begin to make small boats. An adolescent of 16 or 17 is in general capable of cutting a clearing for his mother or sister.

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86 Most often the guardian takes his role very seriously, giving his main attention to teaching the child all that is necessary. If it is a woman, she asks her brothers to teach the techniques of boating and building.

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[291] The principle is to develop very early a sense of responsibility in the child by making it progressively necessary for him to earn his living. The guardian does not furnish pocket money, and with the exception of a hammock every other year, no manufactured objects (children under 11-12 years not being clothed, he has almost no expenses for clothing). But he gives the child progressively chances to earn money by his work. From ten years on, the child begins to render some services: for example for the construction of a boat, he helps transport the dry palm branches intended for the burning. If the boat is being

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592 The household. Household life is a limited association, freely
593 agreed upon by two beings who live totally independent of each
other, the emotional life of each remaining almost entirely
centered upon his maternal family. It entails reciprocal duties:

--For the man, to build a house for his wife in her village,
to construct a new boat for her every three or four years, to cut
a clearing for her each year /150/ and help in planting it, to
furnish her with imported commodities, cloth, salt, kerosene,
tools, which she needs, as well as game and smoke-dried fish;

--For the woman, to farm the clearing and furnish her
husband when he comes to visit her with couac and the vegetables
necessary for his food. (The man, used to living as a bachelor,
owns his own cooking utensils and most of the time prepares his
meals himself.)

This system of intermittent conjugal life seems to assure
the Boni a perfect balance at the same time that it permits them
[562] to satisfy their taste for change. The men divide their life
among work, visits to their different wives, hunting and fishing
expeditions; their life is thus constantly renewed and they are
protected against tendencies toward apathy and mental inertia.

In general, as long as the union lasts, the woman fulfills
[241] exactly her obligations; although the yield from the clearing is
[422] her property and the excess of the harvest is sold for her ex-
[434] clusive benefit, the man is assured of getting from her all the
[591] provisions he needs. On the other hand, many men, through
laziness, get out of constructing a house for their wives and the
latter continue to live with their mothers. In the villages on
the French bank about 20 such cases were observed in 1958.

591 Several cases are even noted in which a woman, aged but still
592 having unmarried children, one or two of her daughters and
their children are living together in one house. For example,
in Asisi village, nine persons were living together in the very
small house of their mother and grandmother Tini.

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841 Woman's magic power. The Refugee Blacks assume that a woman, during her menstrual periods, is impure and has the power to destroy the power of abia. So during these periods she must withdraw into a special hut, munu jsu, and prepare her meals in special dishes; she may not prepare her husband's food, for by doing this she would destroy the power of his abia, and must abstain from touching objects he habitually uses, particularly his gun, which would lose its good points for shooting. Even in the little farming habitations which consist of only several huts, one may be sure that one of them serves as a munu jsu.

841 The munu jsu are very simple sheds built by the women themselves, using reclaimed materials taken from huts being demolished; some belong to one woman only; for others, three or four women get together. They have recourse to men only [465] for assembling the framework, remunerating them with several cans of couac or several baskets of yams.

841 /255/ A man who has a powerful abia like the man neŋge abia must abstain from speaking to a woman who has her menses.

[751] The Boni assume there are women wicked enough to willfully hide their menses in order to destroy the power of a man's abia, but he who has a good man neŋge abia cannot be a dupe: the iron circle warns him of the danger by squeezing his arm.

184 According to Mr. W. F. van Lier, the act of willfully
841 hiding her menses is for the Djuka one of the gravest offenses
68 a woman can commit, and the most severe punishments are
inflicted on her. It is not the same with the Boni: in such a case a woman risks only being insulted and banned.

752 Another deeply rooted belief among the Refugee Blacks,
834 and which exists with many Creoles, is the necessity for the
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